DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 192 928 PS 011 767

AUTHOR Carstensen, Laura: And Others
TITLE Children's Attitudes Toward the Elderly: An Intervention.
PUB DATE Mar 80
NOTE 21p.: Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association (Washington, DC, March 26-31, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Age Differences; Attitude Change; Childhood Attitudes; *Children; *Intervention; *Older Adults; *Perception

ABSTRACT

Six- to nine-year-old children's (N=14) initial perceptions of the elderly were reexamined following an intervention consisting of an increase in the frequency of beneficial contact that the children had with old people. Beneficial contact was provided when elderly persons (N=23) served for two months as tutors in a reading program for normal readers. Pre- and post-intervention measures of children's attitudes and reading skills and the morale of the elderly adults were taken. Evaluations of the program were also obtained from elderly and child subjects, school principals and teachers. Analysis of variance revealed a significant interaction effect of group by test, suggesting that a relatively brief intervention can modify children's perceptions of the aged. While there were no significant changes in the responses of the elderly subjects as measured by objective questionnaires, the majority of the tutors reported that they were happier and felt more involved in the community while working in the program. (Author/MP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED192928

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Children's Attitudes Toward the Elderly:

An Intervention

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Laura Carstensen

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Laura Carstensen, Susan E. Mason and Edward C. Caldwell

West Virginia University

PS011767

Running Head: Attitudes Toward the Elderly

Abstract

The present investigation examined children's perceptions of the elderly and reexamined them once again following an intervention consisting of an increase in the frequency of beneficial contact that 6, 7, 8 and 9-year old children had with old people. Elderly persons served as tutors in a reading tutoring program for a period of two months. Pre- and post-intervention measures of attitudes and reading skills were taken in the children and measures of morale were taken in the elderly sample. Evaluations of the program were also obtained from elderly and child subjects, school principals and teachers. An analysis of variance revealed a significant interaction effect of group by test, suggesting that a relatively brief intervention can modify children's perceptions of the aged. While there were no significant changes in the responses of the elderly subjects as measured by objective questionnaires, the majority of the tutors reported that they were happier and felt more involved in the community while working in the program.

Tuckman and Lorge pioneered the research on attitudes toward the elderly in the early 1950's. They reported that high school students viewed the 60's and 70's as ages of inactivity, lack of interest in life and with a complete loss of adult roles (Lorge, Tuckman and Abrams, Note 1). In another study they found that graduate students in a course on the psychology of aging also held negative stereotypes of old people (Tuckman and Lorge,1958). Indeed, even the elderly themselves were reported to hold negative stereotypes of old age (Tuckman and Lorge,1952). It appears that these negative stereotypes of the elderly and old age have not changed significantly over the past 30 years. Kastenbaum and Durkee (1964) found that old age was viewed as risky, unpleasant and without significant positive value. Over a decade later Sadowski (1978) replicated the Kastenbaum and Durkee study and found similar results. Other common descriptors of the aged include absentmindedness (Tuckman and Lorge 1958), non-productivity (Butler,1975), rigidity (Britton and Britton,1971), dependency (Hess,1976) and both irritability and serenity (Butler and Lewis,1977). Johnson and Kamara (1977) cited results of a 1977 Harris Poll where the majority of Americans felt that the elderly were weak, feeble, in poor health and beset by loneliness.

The replicability of these finds among adult populations of various ages and socioeconomic levels provides evidence for the extensiveness of a negative view of older persons. However, relatively few investigations have focused on children's attitudes toward the elderly. In part, this may be due to the inability of very young children to accurately discriminate age among adults of various age groups (Looft 1971) yet there remains a paucity of studies on children who are old enough to discriminate age

well. Thomae (1970) and Baltes and Goulet (1971) contend that perceptions of age differences hold within them the developmental antecedents of the patterns and direction of ontogenetic change. Therefore the formation of attitudes which devalue old age carries the potential to effect the way children will view the elderly as young adults; as well as the way they will view themselves as elderly adults.

The few studies conducted with children over six years of age have revealed inconsistent results. Hickey, Hickey and Kalish (1968) investigated the reactions of 208 third graders (8-9 year olds) toward the elderly. Physical characterizations included difficulty in walking (e.g., limping, walking slowly and needing to be driven), visual and auditory impairments, changed complexions (e.g., wrinkles, discolored skin) and a general feebleness. Reported social characteristics were kindness, meanness, poverty, loneliness, eccentricity and senility. Seefeldt, Jantz, Galpen and Serock (1977a, 1977b) reported findings similar to those of Hickey, Hickey and Kalish (1968).

Thomas and Yamamoto (1975) did not find these alleged negative attitudes toward the aged in their sample of 800 children aged 11-15 years. In their study, subjects were shown newspaper photographs of three men, including a 30-year-old, a 50-year-old and a 70-year old, in random order. Each was asked to select the order in which she/he wished to write about the men, to estimate the age of the person in each photograph and then write a story about each person. Children chose to write about the young person first, the old person second and the middle-aged person last.

In a similar investigation, Weinberger (1979) studied 106 boys and girls, aged 5-8 years. The elderly were portrayed significantly more often

than young people as having the fewest friends and being sick and/or ugly. However, children demonstrated a positive bias for requesting aid from an elderly person and also indicated that they would come to aid of an elderly person first. Still, old people were judged to make the "least desirable friends."

The results of research on children's perceptions of the elderly are at best ambiguous. Although gerontological researchers have generally found negative stereotyping to be the norm, some investigators have found positive stereotyping as well. Moreover, some of the characterizations which have been considered negative stereotypes, such as wrinkles and graying hair, represent factual knowledge, not negative stereotyping (Kogan 1979). Further, although there is empirical evidence to suggest that some degree of stereotyping begins during middle childhood, there has been no attempt to intervene this early in the lifespan.

In summary, previous research has demonstrated that children below the ages of 5 or 6 do not hold negative stereotypes of the elderly whereas adolescents do.[1] Thus, one could speculate that attitudes toward aging and the aged begin to be formed during the period of middle childhood. It follows that the study of attitudes and attitude change in children between the ages of 6 and 12 is of paramount importance in the lifespan developmental analysis of attitudes regarding aging.

Bruebaker and Powers (1976) asserted that:

> Direct contact and experience with individuals who are old is likely to result in a positive stereotype. In other words, because individuals come into contact with older persons, it is expected that the distance between the observer and observed decreases and the ambiguity of the situation declines. (p. 445)

This notion gains empirical support in Bell and Stanfield's (1973) findings that frequent contact with great-grandparents produces more favorable attitudes toward the elderly and again in Kidwell and Booth's (1977) findings that the degree of estrangement and social distance that young people feel from the old is negatively correlated with the amount of contact with old people.

One would expect that attitudes would be a function of the type of contact one has with older people as well as the amount of contact. For example, if one is limited to exposure to old persons who are institutionalized and/or infirmed, the attitudes formed may be much different than if the exposure is to members of the Gray Panthers.

In the past, elderly people have been utilized as paraprofessional aides in programs for disadvantaged children (e.g., Cowen, Leibowitz and Leibowitz 1968; Kalson 1976; Matefy 1978). The foster-grandparent program also acts to increase contact of the old with the young (Theologus and Cook, Note 2). Benefits to the old as a result of volunteer participation have been reported (Graney 1975; Kalson 1976; Theologus and Cook 1977) and improvement in the psychosocial development of disadvantaged children has also been noted (Cowen, Leibowitz and Leibowitz 1968; Matefy 1978), but to date no one has systematically examined attitude change in the children toward the aged in these programs.

The present investigation was designed to examine children's attitudes toward old persons before and after participation in a reading tutoring program conducted by older adults. The purpose was two-fold. First, it provided an opportunity to measure change in the attitudes of children toward the elderly after exposure to old people in a distinct and socially

valued role. Second, the design allowed for the assessment of morale in elderly subjects serving as tutors, before and after participation in the program.

Method

Samples

Child Sample. The child sample consisted of 14 girls and 12 boys from Monongalia County (mean age = 7.27). The socioeconomic level of families within each of the three schools varied from low to upper-middle levels. Fifteen of the children were identified by their respective teachers as having a reading skills deficit, but all were considered "normal" learners. These identified children served as the experimental group and the remaining 11 as the control group. Thirty-one percent of the children in the sample had daily contact and 36% had frequent (weekly) contact with grandparents, so the sample was not unduly isolated from older people at the start of the program.

Elderly Sample. The elderly sample consisted of 23 elderly community members (20 females and 3 males; mean age = 72), eleven of whom volunteered to tutor in the reading program. Subjects were solicited through a local senior citizens center, the local chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons, bulletins to local newspapers and churches and by third person referrals.

Child Measures.

Children's Assessment of Old People Scale (CAOPS). The CAOPS, developed specifically for use in this investigation, is a 20-item questionnaire. In administering the CAOPS, subjects are first shown photographs of several young adults and elderly adults (both males and females) in order to insure

identity of the age groups to which the experimenter is referring. Following this procedure, subjects are asked to imagine an old adult and a young adult. Attitude measurement on the CAOPS requires that the subject imagine a person that they do not know so that the assessments are based on a stereotype rather than an opinion about a specific person. Sex of the imagined person is not specified. Next, children are asked a series of questions such as: "If you were having trouble getting your boots off, whom would you ask for help?", "Which of these people is sick?" and "Who likes you the best?"

The items on the CAOPS compose subcategories which reflect emotional, intellectual, global and physical assessments of the aged. This breakdown allows observations of stereotyping or the lack of stereotyping, along separate dimensions. Test-retest reliability of the scale is .76.

Diagnostic Reading Test for the Caldwell Reading Tutoring Program (Caldwell, Denne and Frangia, Note 3) This measure is used as a tool to assess reading level upon entry and completion of the Caldwell Reading Tutoring Program (CRT). Subjects are asked to specify the sounds made by single letters, blends, digraphs, real words and nonsense words. Correct responses are scored and totaled for the final score.

Elderly Measures.

Lohmann's Life Satisfaction Scale (LLSS). Lohmann (1980) factor analyzed seven frequently used scales of life satisfaction and constructed a new scale which combines items from these measures. The 18-item version was used in the present investigation. Subjects are asked to agree or disagree with the 18 statements. Positive scores are totaled to obtain an overall satisfaction score.

Purpose in Life Test (PIL). The PIL was designed to measure Frankl's concept of "existential vacuum." It has been used previously to measure the perceived "lack of meaning" in the lives of elderly populations (Acuff and Allen 1970). Both construct and concurrent validity have been assessed and established to be adequate (Crumbaugh 1968; Crumbaugh & Maholik, Note 4). Split-half reliability was reported to be .81 (Crumbaugh and Maholick 1964).

Evaluative Forms. In order to directly assess the tutors' perceptions of the program, its benefits and inconveniences, evaluation forms were supplied to subjects after completion of the program. The forms included questions concerning their feelings about their increased involvement in the community. Students, teachers and principals were also asked to complete brief evaluative questionnaires.

Procedure

Elderly persons worked as volunteer tutors in the Caldwell Reading Tutoring Program, a guided reading system which has been in use in the Monongalia County public schools for the past two years. Elderly subjects were trained in the administration of the program in two, two-hour training sessions. A third meeting was held at the mid-point of the program in order to answer questions. Close contact with tutors was maintained throughout the program. Transportation was supplied for those who required it.

After the first two training sessions, tutors were administered The Purpose in Life Test and Lohmann's Life Satisfaction Scale. Tutors were blind to the focus on attitude measurement in the study. Children were assessed on the Children's Assessments of Old People Scale and the Diagnostic Reading Test in order to obtain baseline data on attitudes and reading ability.

Following this initial data collection, the tutoring program began. Fifteen children, five from each of three schools, were tutored for 15 minutes a day, four days a week, over a period of two months. Each of the tutors worked for approximately one hour a day, one day per week, for the duration of the program.

Following completion of the program, post-test data were collected on each of the measures initially administered. At this time, tutors were informed about the rationale and purpose of the study. Evaluation forms were given to each of the tutors. In addition to the post-test measures, children were asked whether or not they liked the program, whether they learned a lot and whether they thought that the tutors were old. The school principals and teacher were also asked to complete informal questionnaires concerning their opinion of the program.

Results

Child Measures

Children's Assessments of Old People Scale (CAOPS). An analysis of variance, repeated measures design was computed on the scores. The main effect of group was not significant nor was there a significant effect of time. The group X test interaction was significant, however, F (1,24) = 4.39, $p < .05$. An F-test of simple effects indicated that the scores of the subjects in the experimental group decreased over time indicating a more positive attitude toward the elderly, F (1,22) = 4.35, $p < .05$. There were not significant simple effects over time for the control group or significant differences between group scores at either pre- or post-testing. Neither age, sex or contact with grandparents and/or other older people correlated significantly with attitudes toward the aged at either time of testing.

On the average, neither group responded extremely negatively at either time of testing. Rather, scores tended to fall close to the mid-point of the possible range (20-40) with the overall mean score at pre-test being 32.01. Tests for significance of difference between two proportions were computed based on the percentages of responses. Of the four sub-categories (physical, emotional, global and intellectual) only the physical category consistently elicited a favoring of young persons over the old. The five items taken together were responded to as preferring the young person over the old person 92% of the time. Items in the remaining three groups (global, emotional and intellectual) did not consistently favor the young or the old.

Neither age, sex or contact with grandparents and other older people correlated significantly with attitudes toward the aged at either time of testing.

Diagnostic Reading Test. Scores on the post-test data collection were higher than scores on the pre-test for both the experimental and control groups $F(1, 17) = 7.64$, $p < .05$. The effects of group and group X test interaction were not significant.

Elderly Measures

Lohmann's Lake Satisfaction Scale (LLSS). Subjects in both the control and experimental groups scored at the upper end of this the possible range. Mean scores for the experimental group at pre and posttesting were 17.09 and 16.10 respectively. Mean scores for the control group were 15.50 and 16.25 respectively. An analysis of variance using repeated measures did not reveal significant main effects or a group by test interaction effect.

Purpose in Life Test (PIL). The PIL was scored by totaling all ratings. Crumbaugh and Maholick (1969) reported that scores above 112 indicate the presence of a "definite purpose and meaning in life." Average scores for both groups were above this cut-off on both pre- and post-testing. At pre-testing the average scores for the experimental group was 114 and at post-testing was 118. The average control group scores were 117 and 121 respectively. An analysis of variance, repeated measures did not reveal a significant difference in scores by time of testing, between groups or a group X test interaction.

Anecdotal Data

The evaluation forms provided direct opinions of the program from the tutors. Eighty percent of the subjects reported that they personally benefitted through participation in the program. Seventy percent of the sample responded that they felt more in touch with the community as a result of working in the program and 70% reported feeling "happier" while working on the program. Subjects were asked to respond to the question, "Would you participate in the program next year?" To this, 60% replied, "yes", 30% were undecided and 10% said "no."

At post-test, children in the experimental group were also questioned about the program. All of the children said that they learned a lot in the program and liked the tutors. When asked whether or not they thought that the tutors were old, 73% replied "yes" and 27% replied "no." When asked their opinions about the program, all of the principals and teachers responded positively.

Discussion

These data provide support for the contention that intervention can

alter children's attitudes toward the aged. However, contact alone may not be sufficient to modify children's perceptions. Although the majority of children in the sample maintained daily to weekly contact with grandparents, the amount of contact was not correlated with attitude scores. However, following a period of increased beneficial contact with old persons, children's attitude scores changed in a positive direction.

Rosow's (1974) concept of "rolelessness" in old age provides a possible explanation for these results. He contends that it is not that old persons function in a devalued role, but that they are without a role entirely. This "role-loss" may be even more apparent to children who see old people frequently. For example, the role of "grandparent," like other roles for the aged in this country, is ambiguous. In some families, there is strong input from older family members and specific roles afforded to them. In these families, children may feel differently about their grandparents than do children who see grandparents frequently but in a "roleless" position. For the latter group, frequency of contact may reinforce negativity rather than alleviate it.

All of the children said that they liked the tutors and learned in the program. However, 27% replied that the tutors were not old. It appears that a surprisingly large proportion of the children had made the tutors exceptions to the rule which devalues old age rather than changed the rule. Although the introduction of new information may change previously existing "rules," it is also possible that instead of changing the rule, individuals will adjust their perceptions of the new information. This problem will remain a consideration in attitude change research.

Further data obtained from the Children's Assessments of Old People

Scale indicate that although children stereotype the old in regard to physical competence, they do not report that they are less able intellectually. They report that younger people are better able to care for them and are preferred as companions. Older people were not assessed as "able" to do anything "better" than younger persons.

Reading scores on objective measures improved for both the control and experimental groups. All of the children were receiving reading instruction in the classroom so this was not an entirely unexpected finding. However, teachers and principals of the involved schools reported improvement in the children's ability as an apparent function of the tutoring program.

It was expected that the morale of the elderly subjects who served as tutors in the program would improve as a function of the increased involvement in the community. Neither the life satisfaction measure nor the Purpose in Life Test revealed significant differences in the pre- and post-data collections. Scores on both of these measures were high on the pre-test data indicating that these people had exceptionally high morale from the onset of the program. The sample is clearly not representative of the aged population as a whole. Most of the elderly participants were recruited from senior citizens organizations, a population which is in relatively good health, mobile and at least moderately active.

While the objective measures did not demonstrate improved morale, the evaluation forms resulted in some interesting comments concerning the program. Most of the people who participated as tutors said that they felt happier and more involved in the community while working on the program. Perhaps the best indicator of their satisfaction was their response to the

question, "Would you participate in the program next year?" To this, 60% replied, "yes," 30% were undecided and 10% said, "no."

Throughout the investigation, it was interesting to note the behavior of the school officials, parents and children in response to the initiation of the program. It is easily apparent that elderly persons are an unusual sight in elementary schools. At first, principals were reluctant to allow the program to begin (even though it had been operating for two years prior to this study using younger tutors). Approximately two weeks into the program, one principal insisted that all of the tutors sign a letter releasing the school from any responsibility in case of illness or accident. At the close of the reading program, teachers uniformly agreed that children who participated showed at least "some" improvement in classroom work. One student was reported to have improved his grades to the point of a letter grade change. Two of the teachers asked that the program be continued next year and another asked for the names and addresses of the tutors so that she could write a personal note to each. The principal of one school asked a tutor to come back during the upcoming year to present a regular story-hour for the children. In hindsight, attitudes measures from teachers and school officials would have been an interesting addition.

It would be impossible to talk about direct functional relationships as a result of this kind of program. The treatment was multidimensional and indirect. Many aspects of the intervention besides those directly measured probably contributed to its overall success. However, it appears that the attitudes of preadolescent children can be relatively easily modified. Intervention at the individual level may therefore be best advised early in the lifespan.

Reference Notes

1. Lorge, I., Tuckman, J. and Abrams, A. Attitudes of junior and senior high school students toward aging. Special report of the New York State Joint Legislative Committee on the Problems of Aging, 1954, 59-63.

2. Theologus, G.C. and Cook, R. F. A model for the assessment of the foster grandparent and senior companion programs. A report compiled in completion of contractual requirement under contrant No. 76-043-1078, 1977.

3. Caldwell, E., Denne, T. and Frangia, G. Caldwell Reading Tutoring Program. Unpublished manuscript, 1978.

4. Crumbaugh, J.C. and Maholick, L.T. Manual of instructions for the Purpose-in-Life Test, 1969, Psychometric Affiliates, Munster, Indiana.

References

Acuff, G. & Allen, D. Hiatus in "meaning": Disengagement for retired professors. Journal of Gerontology, 1970, 25, 126-128.

Baltes, P.B. & Goulet, L.R. Exploration of developmental variables by manipulation and simulation of age differences in behavior. Human Development, 1971, 14, 149-170.

Bell, B.D. & Stanfield, G.G. The aging stereotype in experimental perspective. Gerontologist, 1973, 13, 341-344.

Britton, J. & Britton, J.H. Young people's perceptions of age and aging. Journal of Gerontology, 1971, 26, 39, (abstract).

Brubaker, T.H. & Powers, E.A. The stereotypes of "old": A review and alternative approach. Journal of Gerontology, 1976, 31, 441-447.

Butler, R. Why Survive?: Growing Old in America. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

Butler, R. & Lewis, M.I. Aging and Mental Health: Positive Psychosocial Approaches. Saint Louis: The C.V. Mosby Company, 1977.

Cowen, E.L., Leibowitz, E. & Leibowitz, G. The utilization of retired people as mental health aides in the schools. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1968, 38, 900-909.

Crumbaugh, J.C. Cross-validation of Purpose-in-Life Test based on Frankl's concepts. Journal of Individual Psychology, 1968, 24, 74-81.

Crumbaugh, J.C. & Maholick, L.T. Manual of Instructions for the Purpose-in-Life Test, 1969, Psychometric Affiliates, Munster, Indiana.

Crumbaugh, J.C. & Maholick, L.T. An experimental study in existentialism; The psychometric approach to Frankl's noogenic neurosis. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 1964, 20, (2), 200-207.

Frankl, V. Beyond Self-actualization and self-expression. Journal of Existential Psychology, 1960, 1, 5-20.

Graney, M. Happiness and social participation in aging. Journal of Gerontology, 1975, 30, 6, 701-706.

Hess, B. Stereotypes of the aged. In B.B. Hess (Ed.) Growing Old in America, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1976.

Hickey, T., Hickey, L. & Kalish, R. Children's perceptions of the elderly. Journal of Genetic Psychology, 1968, 112, 227-235.

Johnson, G. & Kamara, J.L. Growing up and old: The politics of age exclusion. International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 1977-1978, 8, 2, 99-110.

Kalson, L. M*A*S*H, A program of social interaction between institutionalized aged and adult mentally retarded persons, Gerontologist, 1976, 16, 4, 340-348.

Kastenbaum, R. & Durkee, N. Young people view old age, In R. Kastenbaum (Ed.) New Thoughts on Old Age, New York: Springer, 1968.

Kidwell, I.J. & Booth, A. Social distance and intergenerational relations. Gerontologist, 1977, 17, 5, 412-420.

Kogan, N. Beliefs, Attitudes and stereotypes about old people: A new look at some old issues. Research on Aging, 1979, 1, 1, 12-36.

Lohmann, N. A factor analysis of life satisfaction, adjustment and morale with elderly adults. International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 1980, 11, 1, 35-44.

Looft, W.R. Children's judgments of age. Child Development, 1971, 42, 1282-1284.

Matefy, R.E. Evaluation of a remediation program using senior citizens as psychoeducational agents. Community Mental Health Journal, 1978, 14, 4, 327-336.

Rosow, I. Socialization to Old Age. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

Sadowski, B.S. Attitudes toward the elderly and perceived age among two cohort groups as determined by the AAAT. Educational Gerontology. 1978, 3, 71-77.

Seefeldt, C., Jantz, A., Galper, A. & Serock, K. Children's attitudes toward the elderly: educational implications. Educational Gerontology, 1977a, 2, 301-311.

Seefeldt, C., Jantz, R.K., Galper, A. & Serock, K. Using pictures to explore children's attitudes toward the elderly. Gerontologist, 1977b, 17, 506-512.

Thomae, H. Theory of aging and cognitive theory of personality. Human Development, 1970, 13, 1-16.

Thomas, E.C. & Yamamoto, K. Attitudes toward age: An exploration in school-age children. International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 1975, 6, 2, 117-129.

Trent, C., Glass, J.C. & Crockett, J. Changing adolescent 4-H club members' attitudes toward the aged. Educational Geronotology: An international quarterly, 1979, 4, 33-48.

Tuckman, J. & Lorge, I. The effects of institutionalization on attitudes toward old people. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1952, 47, 337-344.

Tuckman, J. & Lorge, I. Attitudes toward aging of individuals with experience with the aged. Journal of Genetic Psychology, 1958, 92, 199-215.

Weinberger, A. Stereotyping of the elderly: Elementary school children's responses. Research on Aging, 1979, 1, 1, 113-136.

An earlier draft of this research was submitted to West Virginia University by the senior author in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology. The research was supported in part by a grant from the West Virginia University Foundation. Thanks go to Stanley Cohen and Nancy Datan for their valuable contributions as thesis committee memebers and to Barry Edelstein for his helpful comments and criticisms. Requests for reprints should be sent to Laura Carstensen, Psychology Department, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia, 26506.

[1]While most of the available research indicates that adolescents generally hold negative attitudes toward the elderly, one exception was reported by Trent, Glass & Crockett (1979). In their sample, 4-H club members, aged 13-18, held slightly positive attitudes toward old persons at the onset of their program but were still amenable to change in a more positive direction through an intervention program.